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CATEGORIAL STATUS OF THE PHRASE 'A LOT OF' IN MODERN ENGLISH FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE PROTOTYPE THEORY

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SUMMARY

*This article deals with the definition of the grammatical status of the phrase **a lot of** in the Modern English language. In grammar, a phrase is traditionally understood as a combination of words that is not a primary predication structure.*

*The question of the place of the phrase **a lot of** within the system of parts of speech of the English language has not been solved in anglistics until now. In this work we are making an attempt to suggest our solution of the problem. The difficulties of the definition of the grammatical status of the lexeme **a lot of** are closely connected with the general problem of definition of the parts of speech which remains topical since the time of Aristotle. There exist a number of grammatical classifications of Parts of Speech, based upon different criteria. The question of the criteria is decisive when one deals with classification of the words of any language into certain groups. Depending upon the criteria such groups of words can be called "lexical", "grammatical"; "lexico-grammatical". In our opinion the most appropriate way to find the place of a language unit in the system of the parts of speech is to analyze peculiarities of its functioning in speech using the principles of the prototype theory, which gives the possibility to take into account all content and formal characteristics of a lexeme under analysis, refer it to a certain conceptual category and in that way arrive at its place in a certain discourse – cognitive group of words, traditionally called the Parts of Speech.*

*In the course of our analysis we came to the conclusion that semantic and formal characteristics of the lexeme **lot** correspond to*

those of the prototypical ones of the noun. Thus, the phrase a lot of constitutes a syntactic construction consisting of the noun lot, which has a quantitative meaning, its prepositional determiner (the article a) and its postpositional prepositional modifier (with the preposition of).

Key words: *Phrase, a lot of, prototype, noun, determiner, part of speech, lexeme, pronoun.*

Introduction. This article deals with the definition of the grammatical status of the phrase *a lot of* in the Modern English language. In grammar, *a phrase* is traditionally understood as a combination of words that is not a primary predication structure (Curme 1977; Korsakov 2007; WNMD 1977).

The question of the place of the phrase *a lot of* within the system of parts of speech of the English language has not been solved in anglistics until now. This fact explains the **topicality** of our work. In this regard, we analysed 17 theoretical works (cit. for Moiseienko 1999: 54–103). 25 manuals of English grammars (cit. for Moiseienko 1999: 103–152), as well as 10 of the most authoritative explanatory and etymological dictionaries of the English language published over the last 50 years (ALD 1980; ChTCD 1973; EWD 1988; DEE 1985; LD 2000; MD 2002; RHD 1973; UED 1932); WBD 1986; WNWD 1977).

Among the 25 textbooks on English grammar that we studied, the phrase *a lot of* is discussed in one way or another in only 9 (cit. from Matuznaja 1990: 59–65; Korsakov 2007). Our **aim** is to establish the categorial meaning of the phrase *a lot of* in Modern English. The **tasks** of our investigation were to define the prototypical characteristics of the English noun, to describe the essential grammatical properties of the lexeme *a lot of* and to answer the question whether the determiner can be considered a separate part of speech. **Methods of analysis.** In our research we used the *method of descriptive analysis*. Its theoretical foundation are the principles of the prototype theory.

Results and discussion. The difficulties of the definition of the grammatical status of the *lexeme a lot of* are closely connected with the general problem of definition of the parts of speech which remains topical since the time of Aristotle (Alexeeva 2007). There exist a number of grammatical classifications of Parts

of Speech, based upon different criteria (Kharitonov 2008; Volkova 2010). The question of the criteria is decisive when one deals with classification of the words of any language into certain groups. Depending upon the criteria such groups of words can be called “lexical” (Close 2005), “grammatical” (Fries 1952), “lexico-grammatical” (Matthews 1984). In our opinion the most appropriate way to find the place of a language unit in the system of the parts of speech is to analyze peculiarities of its functioning in speech using the principles of the prototype theory, which gives the possibility to take into account all content and formal characteristics of a lexeme under analysis, refer it to a certain conceptual category and in that way arrive at its place in a certain discourse – cognitive group of words, traditionally called the Parts of Speech.

In this article we are analyzing the points of view of the linguists on the problem in question and suggest our approach to its solution.

M. Ganshina and N. Vasilevskaya, explaining the rules for the use of expressions such as *a lot of* and *lots of*, do not define their grammatical status (cit. from Moiseienko 1999: 87). Describing the uses of the phrase *a lot of* in modern English, the textbook on practical English grammar by K. N. Kachalova and E. S. Izrailevich (ibidem) says nothing about the part-of-speech status of this language unit. E. Gordon and I. Krylova classify ‘a lot of’ and ‘lots of’ as indefinite quantifiers (cit. from Korsakov 2013). Reznik R. V. et al., in their practical grammar of the English language, refer to *a lot of* as a phrasal quantifier (a kind of determiner) (Moiseienko 1999). Another grammarian examines the characteristics of the use of the phrase *a lot of* in English; however, its place within the system of parts of speech is not defined (Matuznaja 1990). D. Beiber et al. *understand a lot of* as belonging to the group of function words, determiners (Biber 2010). M. Swan describes ‘a lot of’ and ‘lots of’ as expressions similar in meaning to the determiners *much, many and most* (Swan 2003). W. Francis, a representative of the American structuralism, identifies *a lot of* and *lots of* as “an interesting group of forms, determiners, and markers of nouns” (Francis 1958).

According to W. Francis, there are four parts of speech in English: nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Pronouns, of which

W. Francis lists eight (I, we, he, you, she, it, they, who), belong to one of the subclasses of nouns (Francis 1958). The scientist classifies all other elements traditionally referred to as pronouns into another subclass of nouns, for example: *all, any, mine, very many, either, neither, this/that, somebody, something, nothing*, etc. (Ibid.). Thus, W. Francis does not classify determiners as belonging to any part of speech.

R. Close, like W. Francis, regards *a lot of* and *lots of* as determiners of nouns, which are components of the noun phrase. R. Close does not deal with parts of speech as such, and the issue of classifying determiners as parts of speech is not addressed by him. He defines determiners merely as ‘modifiers of nouns’ (Close 2005).

Summarizing the facts mentioned above, it can be stated that in the English grammar textbooks we have analyzed, the grammatical status of the phrase *a lot of* is defined as a pronoun, a determiner, or a phrasal quantifier.

Scientific publications on theoretical English grammar do not pay much attention to the phrase *a lot of*. It is discussed only in the grammar by D. Giering and co-authors, where this lexeme is presented as a complex determiner (Giering et al. 1989: 25, 76). In their turn the authors treat a determiner as one of the parts of speech (Giering et al. 1989). When describing the phrase *a lot of*, dictionaries do not refer it to a separate entry but consider it within the system of meanings of the lexeme *lot*, which is marked as a noun and as a function word (ALD 1980; ChTCD 1973; EWD 1988; DEE 1985; LD 2000; MD 2002; RHD 1973; UED 1932; WBD 1986; WNWD 1977). To illustrate various cases of using of *a lot of* as a function word, MD dictionary gives the example: “*A lot of people don’t like the idea*”, mentioning that in such a context *a lot of* is used as a pronoun (MD, 2002).

To determine the place of the phrase *a lot of* in the system of the parts of speech of the English language, let us consider the concept of a determiner, which encompasses a group of words to which this linguistic unit is often assigned.

In English explanatory dictionaries, we find the following definitions of this term: “a determiner is an article, numeral or other word that can be used with a noun and has the function

of limiting quantity, such as: *all, some, a* or *every*” (ALD 1980); “a member of a subclass of English adjectival words, which in a specific way restricts the nouns it modifies and which usually precedes descriptive adjectives, for example: *a, an, the, your, their*” (LD 2000); “a word that defines or restricts the word following it” (WBD 1986); “a restrictive adjective or modifier that is always used with a noun or a noun phrase (Noun Phrase) and often precedes them” (ChTCD 1973); “a special term – a word that precedes a noun and indicates exactly which thing or things the speaker has in mind. *A* and *the* are determiners, as are *this, that, some, which* and *each* when used with nouns” (RHD 1973). Dictionary WNWD defines *determiner* as a linguistic term denoting a word used before a noun to indicate which specific thing or things are being referred to. The words *a, the, this, some* and *every* are determiners (WNWD 1977).

So, based on the explanations given above, we can conclude that a determiner constitutes a group of words of different categorical status, having the same primary grammatical function which is to modify, specify or restrict nouns.

The predecessor of the term *determiner* was the term *determinative*, which, according to G. Palmer and F. Blandford, corresponded to one of the eight parts of speech they proposed: *Nouns; Pronouns and Determinatives; Adjectives; Verbs; Adverbs; Prepositions; Connectives (including the interrogative pronoun ‘who’); Interjections and Exclamations* (Palmer and Blandford 1975).

G. Palmer and F. Blandford combined pronouns and determinatives into a single part of speech, defining ‘determinative’ as words of the following types:

- 1) articles and article-like words: *a, the, this, etc.; some, any* (partitive article); *no, none* (relative determiners);
- 2) quantifiers and numerals: *a, many, five, half,*
- 3) possessives: *her, his, etc.;*
- 4) ordinal numbers: *first, second, last, etc.* (ibidem).

This term and the meaning of the part of speech it denotes are adopted by G. Sorensen (Sorensen 1958). Simon Potter, discussing the classification of parts of speech in English, treats the determiner as a separate part of speech; from this group of words, he excludes numerals (*one, two, three, etc.*) and those

pronouns that are used not as markers of nouns. “Accepting this,” concludes S. Potter, “we arrive at 9 parts of speech: verbs, three nominals (nouns, pronouns, adjectives), three particles (adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and numerals)” (Potter 1975).

In 1982, G. Leech, D. Deicher and P. Hugengod, just like S. Potter, speak about determiners as of a separate part of speech. They mention that determiners and pronouns often overlap, that is why such lexemes as *this*, *that*, *all*, *some*, *which* “may belong to any of these word groups”, for example: *This* wine is very sweet (determiner): *This* is a very sweet wine (a pronoun) *Some* girls (determiner): *some* of the girls (a pronoun) (Leech et al.1982).

As has been mentioned above, D. Giering et al. also treat the phrase *a lot of* as a determiner, and as a particular part of speech (Giering 1989).

However, in our view, there are a number of factors indicating that determiners should not be regarded as a separate part of speech. In this respect we can mention some grammarians’ tendency to refer nouns in possessive case to the class of determiners (Willis 1972).

Indeed a noun in the possessive case, though by no means always, can be used as a pre-modifier of other nouns, for example: John’s book: *That book of John’s*; “*I just met that Joe of Alice’s in High Street*” (J. Lindsay). It follows from the context that *Alice’s Joe* was her only friend.

However, it does not follow from this that nouns in the possessive case, when used before other nouns, cease to be nouns and become another part of speech, namely determiners. In such usages, they remain nouns, nonetheless. Their status of the noun is confirmed by the fact that they can be combined with articles, demonstrative pronouns, adjectives and nouns in a modifying role, and are used in the plural, for example: *the overturned truck’s front portion* (A. Hayley); *a linguistic unit’s identity* (D. Crystal); *the whole world’s population* (A. Hailey); *the paper cylinder’s ends* (D. Hammit); *Charlie pulled on the display dummy’s shirt* (J. Brain); *the wood fire’s friendly crackling* (T. Martin); *babies’ booties were displayed in the shop window* (A. Christie); *a girl’s school* (A. Christie).

In constructions like *John's book*, such grammatical forms as *John's* cannot be considered to be a member of a separate part of speech different from the noun. In our case the researchers of the English language introduce such a grammatical group of words as *determiner* and they are making an effort to refer such forms as *John's* to it. The thing is that the lexeme *John* in *John's* is used in the possessive case, but it is not the possessive case of the *determiner John*, but of *the noun John*. The word *John* in the preposition without 's cannot be combined with *nouns* and therefore cannot be a *determiner*. A noun in the possessive case, when combined with another noun, can be regarded as a marker of that second noun, and only in this sense, because of its function, it can be considered a *determiner*. From here it follows that it is rather doubtful to treat *determiner* as a separate part of speech.

Some grammarians also classify the linguistic unit *somebody* in expressions such as *somebody's fault* (M. Heath) as a *determiner* (cit. from Moiseienko 1999: 127) However, *somebody's* is the possessive case of the lexeme *somebody*, which, according to most researchers of English grammar, is considered to be a pronoun (Moiseienko 1999: 128) The dictionary (WNWD 1977) defines 'somebody' as: "1. pron. (pronoun) some person. 2. noun (noun) a person of some note or importance".

The following examples illustrate the use of the lexeme *somebody* as a pronoun and as a noun.

1. *Somebody got the money and Captain Butler must be one of the somebodies* (M. Mirchell). In this example *somebody* used as a subject is a pronoun.

Somebody in the expression 'one of the somebodies' has clear characteristics of a noun – plural form, combination with a definite article and a preposition.

She is *a somebody*, a big name (A. Christie) – in this sentence, *somebody* also possesses the characteristics of a noun – it is combined with an indefinite article and functions as a predicative.

It should be mentioned that the dictionary (RHD 1973) in which a *determiner* is defined as one of the grammatical classes of words, as well as the dictionary (WNWD 1977), mark the lexeme *somebody* as 1. pronoun and as 2. noun.

The lexemes *much*, *many*, *more*, *most*, used in preposition to a noun, are also spoken of as being determiners (Moiseienko 1999: 153). However, *more* and *most* are the comparative and superlative forms of the language units *much* and *many*, which, when used in preposition to a noun, are considered by most grammarians and lexicographers to be adjectives (Colwell, Knox 1973; Quirk, Greenbaum 2006; Rayevska 1976; DEE 1985).

The articles *the*, *a* and the zero article are also classified by some grammarians as determiners, a separate part of speech (Moiseienko 1999: 70). There exists an opinion that the role of definite and indefinite articles in speech is not to indicate that the words following them are nouns, but rather to convey specific communicative information. According to A. I. Smirnitsky, their functions are, respectively, individualising and classifying (cit. from Korsakov 2013).

According to R. Quirk and co-authors, “articles have no lexical meaning” and “do not perform any function independently of the noun” (Quirk, Greenbaum 2006). In his turn A. K. Korsakov considers that the essential grammatical meaning of the article (*the*, *a*) is the degree of abstraction of what is expressed by the word or group of words following the article (Korsakov 2007). Dwight Bolinger, in his monograph “Meaning and Form”, states that our mistake lies in confusing a generalized meaning with the absence of meaning (Bolinger 1977). Consequently, the article can be considered to be an independent part of speech with its own grammatical meaning.

Taking into account all mentioned above, it can be concluded that the determiner includes morphologically and syntactically quite different lexical units which belong to different conceptual categories. In psychology category is understood as a totality of objects and phenomena of the objective world, their analogues in our conscience are concepts (Morokhovskaya 1984). In grammar category can be seen as expression of certain grammatical meaning by means of a corresponding grammatical forms paradigm. Grammatical meaning is the result of the process of generalization of mental concepts reflecting certain fragments of objective reality and their lingual presentation in thinking and speech. Grammatical (categorical) meaning is common to all members of the grammatical category, that is why we can consider it to

be prototypical meaning. As far as we can see the group of words united under the name of *determiner* has neither a common grammatical, prototypical meaning, nor the common grammatical forms paradigm, the only common grammatical characteristic peculiar to all of them is their syntactic function to determine the noun from different aspects. That is why, in our opinion, it cannot be treated as a separate, independent part of speech.

Consequently, the lexeme *a lot of* cannot be understood as a member of a grammatical group of words called *determiner*. Speaking about *a lot of* as of a determiner we can mean that this term does not name a particular part of speech, it is associated only with the syntactic function of the lexeme in question.

What concerns the categorial status of the phrase *a lot of* we would like to state the following.

The structural centre of the phrase *a lot of* is the lexeme *lot*. According to the etymological dictionary (EWD 1988) “the primary Germanic meaning of the lexeme *xlut* is unknown”. In Old English, *hlot* was used in the senses of *portion, choice, decision*’ in the 16th century, in the senses of *party or set*; in the 17th century – *a plot of land*; in the 18th century, the lexeme acquired the meaning *a set of articles*; in the 19th century, *lot* came to be understood as *a large number*. Contemporary explanatory English dictionaries describe its meaning *as a large number, a group, a set of people or things*. As far as we can see the common core in all the meanings of *a lot of* given above is a part of something (points both to concrete (*a plot of land*) and abstract notions (*choice, decision*’); a part of something bigger (*a set of people or things*- of all existing people or things only *a set, a group*); quantity (*a large number* – only a part, though a large one of the whole) (EWD 1988).

The morphological and syntactic characteristics of the linguistic unit *lot* in modern English are as follows:

1. *A lot* is at stake (A. Creasy) (functions as the subject, is used with the indefinite article).

2. I had *a lot* to do (acts as an object, is used with the indefinite article, has a modifier expressed by the infinitive).

3. I had work. That was *a lot* for a man fresh out of jail (C. Hutter) (is used in the syntactic function of a predicative, is used with the indefinite article).

4. I saw *lots* of people (D. Keene) (acts as an object, is used in the plural, is combined with a postpositive prepositional noun modifier).

5. I owe them an *awful lot* (MD 2002) (used as an object, has a modifier expressed by the adjective *awful*, and is combined with the indefinite article).

6. *An awful lot* of food! (A. MacLean) (an elliptical sentence; *lot* is used with the indefinite article, with the adjective *awful* functioning as a modifier, and has a postpositional modifier expressed by a noun with the preposition *of*).

The examples given above show that the lexeme *lot* can be determined by an article, has the category of number and is used in the plural form, functions as a subject, object and predicative, it can be combined with a postpositional prepositional noun modifier, with the adjective *awful*. In other words, it exhibits the essential formal characteristics of a noun. As to its content characteristics it is used in the sense of *a great amount of*. It illustrates the association of the language unit *a lot of* with the conceptual category of quantity. The essential formal characteristics of the word combination in question suggest its belonging to the lexico-grammatical group of the noun, though its grammatical meaning is not *a person* or *thing*, even not a *substance*.

In general grammarians define the semantics of the noun in different ways. Thus, E. S. Legget states that the noun points to “a person, a place or a thing” (cit. from Matuznaya 1990: 48). Some other scientists think that the noun is associated with objects (Ibid.: 56). D. Biber et al. write that nouns commonly refer to concrete entities, such as people and things in the external world (e.g. book, girl), but they may also denote qualities and states (e.g. *freedom*, *friendship*) (Biber 2010). The definitions mentioned above try to connect the part of speech under analysis with certain phenomena of the objective world, but they do not explain such cases as *examination*, *concert*, these words point neither to a person, nor a place, nor a thing (even in philosophical understanding as “an independently existing part of the objective world”), nor to an object. They also cannot be completely associated with qualities and states (Korsakov 2013).

H. Leech et al. say that nouns are typically associated with physical phenomena: people, objects, places, substances etc. It is evident that nouns point not only to concrete things and phenomena but also to abstract concepts which are not connected with anything tangible in our reality (Leech et al. 1982: 122). In this case the question arises about prototypical in categorial semantics of the noun. For A. V. Scherba it is thingness, substantiveness (cit. from Matuznaya 1990). This point of view is shared by many grammarians, for example N. F. Irten'eva, A. I. Smirnickij, M. Y. Blokh, T. A. Barabash (cit. from Matuznaya 1990). L. M. Volkova mentions that the noun possesses the grammatical meaning of thingness, substantiality (Volkova 2011). In her turn I. O. Alexeyeva explains the categorial meaning of the noun as substance or thingness (Alexeyeva 2007). In I. K. Kharitonov's point of view the noun possesses the general implicit lexico-grammatical meaning of thingness (substance) in the wide sense of the word (Kharitonov 2008).

However, the category of thingness, substantiveness, substantiality is a conceptual category and does not correspond to any concrete thing. In this respect V. M. Zhirmunskij, explained that when speaking about noun pointing to a thing, one must keep in mind that thingness is understood as a philosophical, logical category. (cit. from Korsakov 2013). At the same time D. Katz declares that a lot of nouns are not connected with the notion thingness or substantiality (*truth, pain*). In his opinion such nouns have nothing in common in their semantics (cit. from Matuznaya 1990). Concerning this statement we would like to mention that no word points directly to anything in the outer world. Each component of an utterance, of a sentence is a sign, a reference, a name of a fragment of thought of a speaker, which only indirectly reflects a certain fragment of the objective world including the speaker.

Thus, the noun is associated with certain concept in the conscience of a language user and through it is correlated with objects and phenomena of the objective world. Now we will consider the overt forms of the nouns *boy* (a class noun, concrete) and *concert* (abstract noun): *boy, boy's boys; the boy, about the boy; the boy was (the boys were) happy; we saw that boy (object)*

concert, concert's concerts; the concert, about the concert; concert was (the concerts were) wonderful; we liked that concert (object).

As far as we can see their overt forms are similar, conceptually the noun *boy* is associated with a substance, though the noun *concert* conceptually does not point to a substance it is treated in speech as if it did. It means that the representatives of the language community perceive it as having substantivity qualities. I. O. Alexeyeva explains that *thingness* is a grammatical meaning that permits names of abstract notions, actions and qualities to function in the same way with names of objects and living beings (Alexeyeva 2007). I. K. Kharitonov says that the noun denotes things, objects and abstract notions presented as substance (Kharitonov 2008). Everything mentioned above leads to the conclusion that human mentality categorizes phenomena of the objective world in accordance with certain scheme which corresponds to predication structure in our thinking and speech. As soon as this structure has strict places for its members pointing to matter (substances) and their attributes (characteristics of its existence in time and space), then grammatical units occupying these positions will semantically and formally correspond to prototypical representatives of the parts of speech with the help of which the members of the predication structure are verbally expressed. Everything mentioned above proves that the lexical meaning of the lexeme *lot* (quantity) does not contradict the prototypical meaning of the noun.

Structurally, the phrase under investigation, *a lot of*, represents the following syntactic model: (a + lotn) + (of-phrase), where n is a noun, which reflects its overt form. This is one of the syntactic models for the use of most nouns and, in particular, nouns with quantitative semantics, such as: *bit, amount, heap, mountain, number, peck, quantity, sight, world*.

7. *a bit of* string; *a bit of* one's mind (ALD 1980).
8. *a small amount of* water (MD 2002).
9. It made a difference, *a whole heap of* difference (P. Bryant);
10. The ship can't carry *a mountain of* spares (I. Barlov);
11. "I saw *a number of* people coming in here" (B. Lomax);
12. *a peck of* trouble (DEE 1985);
13. *a small quantity of* cement (TLD 2000);

14. *a sight of people; an awful sight of money* (RHD 1973);

15. *Sunshine does children a world of good* (ChTD 1973).

Note that in examples 8, 9, 13 and 14, the given nouns are also combined with an adjective.

Conclusions. Summing up everything mentioned above we can conclude that semantic and formal characteristics of the lexeme *lot* correspond to those of the prototypical ones of the noun. Thus, the phrase *a lot of* constitutes a syntactic construction consisting of the noun *lot*, which has a quantitative meaning, its prepositional determiner (the article *a*) and its postpositional prepositional modifier (with the preposition *of*). The element of the postpositional modifier of the noun *lot*, used after the preposition *of*, can be not only a noun but also a pronoun, and the primary structure of predication (*a lot of food: plenty of it; a lot of people: plenty of them; They spoke loudly enough to hear a lot of what was going on, but not everything* (K. Kramer). It can be also mentioned that the determiner cannot be considered a separate part of speech taking into consideration the absence of common semantic and formal characteristics of the language units referred to it.

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КАТЕГОРІАЛЬНИЙ СТАТУС ФРАЗИ «A LOT OF» У СУЧАСНІЙ АНГЛІЙСЬКІЙ МОВІ З ПОГЛЯДУ ТЕОРІЇ ПРОТОТИПІВ

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Стаття присвячена визначенню граматичного статусу фрази *a lot of* у сучасній англійській мові. У граматиці поняття «фраза» традиційно розуміється, як сполучення слів, що не складає первинну структуру предикації.

Питання категоріального статусу лексики *a lot of* в англійській мові досі не вирішене. У цій студії ми пропонуємо свій погляд на шляхи вирішення зазначеної проблеми. Складнощі у визначенні граматичного статусу лексики *a lot of* тісно пов'язані із загальною проблемою визначення частин мови, яка залишається актуальною з часів Аристотеля. Існує ряд граматичних класифікацій частин мови, заснованих на різних критеріях. Питання критеріїв є вирішальним при класифікації слів будь-якої мови на конкретні групи. Залежно від критеріїв такі групи слів можуть називатися «лексичними», «граматичними» або «лексико-граматичними». На нашу думку, найбільш доцільним способом визначення місця мовної одиниці в системі частин мови — це аналіз особливостей її функціонування у мовленні на базі положень теорії прототипів, що дає змогу врахувати всі змістовні та формальні характеристики досліджуваної лексики, віднести її до певної концептуальної категорії і таким чином визначити її місце у певній дискурсно-когнітивній групі слів, яку традиційно називають частинами мови.

У ході аналізу ми дійшли висновку, що семантичні та формальні характеристики лексики *lot* відповідають прототиповим характеристикам іменника. Таким чином, фраза *a lot of* становить синтаксичну конструкцію, що складається з іменника *lot*, який має кількісне значення, його препозиційного детермінанта (артикля *a*) та його постпозиційного прийменникового модифікатора (з прийменником *of*).

Ключові слова: фраза, *a lot of*, прототип, іменник, детермінатив, частина мови, лексема, займенник.

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